



ASCEND

COLLEGE PREP

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

Mailing Address:

1650 Telstar Drive, Suite 110

Colorado Springs, CO 80920

www.ascendcollegeprep.com

CDE School Code: 7661

NCAA High School Code: 852798

CEEB Code: 060637

School Administration

Position	Email
Principal, Karin McWhorter	karinmcwhorter@ascendcollegeprep.com
Assistant Principal, Jenny Minor	jennyminor@ascendcollegeprep.com
College & Career Advisor, Dana Glass	danaglass@ascendcollegeprep.com
Administrative Assistant, Susan Cannizzaro	susancannizzaro@ascendcollegeprep.com

Ascend College Prep (ACP), the Education reEnvisioned Board of Cooperative Education (BOCES) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) do not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits.

EMERGENCY UPDATES STATUS

INFORMATION ACCESS

Occasionally Ascend College Prep may delay its opening or cancel school due to poor weather conditions in one or more areas of El Paso County, making it unsafe for students to travel. In addition, there may be times when emergency situations occur at school, and parents, staff, and students need to be notified immediately. In all cases, notification will be sent by phone, text, and email.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS DURING EMERGENCIES

During times of inclement weather, the Ascend College Prep Principal will not release students to leave school premises until it has been determined that conditions are safe for travel.

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Ascend College Prep School Board

The ACP school board is electing new officers at the August 26, 2024 meeting.

Current Officers

Bill Frost, President
Beth Szucs, Vice President
Cody Dozier, Secretary
Martha Turobiner, Treasurer
Catherine Dunham, Member at Large
Eric Shipley, Member at Large

Ascend College Prep Leadership

Karin McWhorter Principal
Jenny Minor Assistant Principal

The Principal provides supervision in the following designated areas: (1) administration, (2) personnel management, (3) curriculum development, (4) instruction, (5) short and long range planning, and (6) budgetary and fiscal management.

The Education reEnvisioned Board of Cooperative Education is the administrative unit for Ascend College Prep. The Principal, with the assistance of the Assistant Principal, and faculty, is authorized and empowered to carry out the policies of the Colorado State Board of Education.

CALENDARS & BELL SCHEDULE

Ascend College Prep | 2024-2025 School Calendar 

"A" Schedule	"B" Schedule	"C" Schedule	"D" Schedule	Faculty Only	No School	Final Exam																																																																																											
7-9 Faculty Only Day 12 Students First Day 16 NO SCHOOL 23 Half Day Activity at Ascend 30 NO SCHOOL	AUGUST '24 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			S	M	T	W	Th	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	FEBRUARY '25 <table border="1"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>1</td></tr> </tbody> </table>		S	M	T	W	Th	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	1	7 Full Day Job Fair & Panels 14-17 No School 28 Half Day Activity/Field Trip							
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CALENDARS & BELL SCHEDULE

<p><u>Schedule A (428 Instructional Minutes)</u></p> <p>0830 – 1000: 1st Period 1007 – 1047: Seminar Period 1054 – 1224: 2nd Period 1231 – 1301: Lunch 1308 – 1438: 3rd Period 1445 – 1615: 4th Period</p>	<p><u>Schedule B (428 Instructional Minutes)</u></p> <p>0830 – 1000: 5th Period 1007 – 1047: Seminar Period 1054 – 1224: 6th Period 1231 – 1301: Lunch 1307 – 1438: 7th Period 1445 – 1615: 8th Period</p>
<p><u>Schedule C (344 Instructional Minutes)</u></p> <p>0830 – 0930: Common Testing Period & Collaborative Learning 0937 – 1207: Activity Period 1 1214 – 1244: Lunch 1251 – 1451: Activity Period 2</p>	
<p><u>Schedule C (330 Instructional Minutes)</u></p> <p>0830 – 1023: Discovery Period 1 1030 – 1223: Discovery Period 2 1230 – 1300: Lunch 1307 – 1437: Discovery Period 3</p>	
<p><u>Schedule D (233 Instructional Minutes)</u></p> <p>0830 – 1023: Discovery Period 1 1030 – 1223: Discovery Period 2</p>	
<p><u>Delayed Start (321 Instructional Minutes)</u></p> <p>1000 – 1115: 1st/5th period 1122 – 1237: 2nd/6th period 1244 – 1314: Lunch 1321 – 1436: 3rd/7th period 1443 – 15:38 4th/8th period</p>	

CALENDARS & BELL SCHEDULE

DAYS	Semester 1	Semester 2	Total Days	Total Min	Total Hours
Schedule A	33	35	68	29,104	485.07
Schedule B	33	34	67	28,676	477.93
Schedule C	5	5	10	3,330	55.50
Schedule D	5	5	10	2,330	38.83
Final Exam	5	5	10	3,810	63.5
Total	81	84	165 days	67,250	1120.83

We exceed the CDE required 160 days by 5 days and the required 1080 hours by 40.83 hours.

During the 2024-2025 school year, we will allow for up to 4 true snow days. After that, all weather days will be remote learning days on the delayed start schedule. This will ensure we do not fall below the required state minimums for days or hours.

FEES

Provisions have been made for consideration of a family's financial situation and ability to pay the following fees. Requests for needs-based assistance should be made to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Ascend will maintain strict confidence regarding families who apply for needs-based assistance.

Required Fees

The following fees are required in order to maintain appropriate services for students.

Software & Technology	\$125
Textbook & Materials/Supplies	\$125
Field Trip Fees	\$150
TOTAL	\$400

Note: The above fees will be split into two payments. The first payment will be due upon registration and the second will be invoiced in January 2025.

Additional Fees

Graduation Fee (Seniors Only)	\$200
Senior iFly Field Trip	\$45
Student ID Replacement (1 st)	\$10
Student ID Replacement (2 nd)	\$20

The charges listed above do not include fines for loss or damage to school property; expenses for standardized tests that are optional; club memberships; dances; or school yearbooks.

Graduation Fee

This fee covers the cost of a custom yard sign, student diplomas, cap and gown, custom stoles, facility rental, refreshments, graduation photos, and all other costs associated with graduation. This will be invoiced in February 2025.

Fees for Field Trips

This fee covers all planned field trips for the 2024-2025 school year as well as any additional supplies (as needed) for Friday activities that take place at Ascend. Field trips for this year include but are not limited to: The Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Top Golf, a Ninja Gym, a Climbing Gym, Dart Wars, a Pumpkin Patch, a Self-Defense Course, the USAFA Planetarium, Ice Skating, and the Space Foundaion. Transportation for field trips or community service projects cannot be guaranteed, and students will be required to provide their own lunch on field trip days.

FEES

Schedule for payment of fees

As noted above, the \$400 in required fees is split into two payments of \$200 per semester. The first of these payments is due upon registration and the second will be invoiced in January 2025. Checks or money orders for required fees are to be made out to Ascend College Prep. The senior specific fees February of a student's senior year but may be paid earlier.

Additional Course-Specific Fees

Some courses at Ascend have additional, course-specific, fees due to the need for individual textbooks the students can write in and keep, software specific to that course, or required individual items for labs. These fees will be invoiced in September and February and will be specific to each individual student.

Non-refundable nature of fees

All required fees are non-refundable once payment has been made.

Dual Enrollment Fees

Dual enrollment courses through the University of Colorado "CU Succeed" program at UCCS and UCD are charged at a rate of \$50 per credit hour. Tuition payable to UCCS is paid through the student portal by the student/family. Tuition payable to UCD is paid directly to Ascend and will be invoiced in March 2025. Participation in dual enrollment courses is always optional and need-based subsidies are available for families who are unable to pay these tuition fees.

Courses Paid to UCCS in October 2024	Courses Paid to UCCS in February 2025
U.S. History 1865 - 1920 (\$150)	U.S. Government (\$150)
Rhetoric & Writing 1 (\$150)	Truth in History (\$150)
Computer Programming 1 (\$150)	Rhetoric & Writing 2 (\$150)
Computer Programming 2 (\$150)	Literature (\$150)
	Psychology (\$150)
	Computer Programming 2 (\$150)
	Cybersecurity (\$150)
	Astronomy w/Lab (\$200)
	Biology w/Lab (\$200)
	Advanced Biology w/Lab (\$200)

FEES

Courses Paid to UCCS in October 2024	Courses Paid to UCCS in February 2025
	Chemistry w/Lab (\$200)
	Physics w/Lab (\$250)
	Calculus 1 (\$200)
	Calculus 2 (\$200)
	Statistics (\$200)

Courses Paid to Ascend in October 2024	Courses Paid to Ascend in March 2025
	College Algebra (\$200)

Fines and Penalties

Textbooks

Ascend issues textbooks and related instructional materials to its students. Failure to return such books and materials to the school at the appointed time and in acceptable condition will result in fines up to and including the cost of replacement books and materials. The Principal will assess all fines dealing with textbooks and related instructional material for students.

MISSION AND VISION

VISION

Create a transformative educational experience for students focused on in-depth content knowledge; problem solving and critical thinking; leadership, communication, and service; and personal health and well-being. We prepare students for success in the 21st century by engaging them in rigorous and relevant learning opportunities that promote academic, physical, and emotional growth.

MISSION

Prepare and inspire students to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens through rigorous academic courses, personalized electives, and active community engagement.

PHILOSOPHY

Ascend College Prep recognizes the unique values, needs, and talents of all students. The program at Ascend is designed to challenge each student based on individual capabilities, background, interests in certain curricular areas, and on college requirements.

The curriculum at Ascend provides students with the foundation needed for successful academic pursuits after high school. Each discipline is seen as a part of the whole rather than as a separate entity. The total instructional program is integrated in such a way that students do not perceive content information as isolated and fragmented but understand the interrelatedness of all learning. The instructional climate is conducive to recognizing entry level skills and abilities of each student and then allowing students to progress to reach their maximum potential.

The faculty and administration at Ascend College Prep bring diverse talents and superior teaching skills to the college preparatory instructional program. Instructors at Ascend are encouraged to draw upon their creative abilities to seek innovative approaches to instruction. Instructional techniques allowing students to develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, research, independent study, and the use of technology are stressed. Faculty members are encouraged to seek continuing professional development to remain current in their respective fields.

Each student is expected to assume a cooperative, responsible role in the total Ascend community. Each person within the community will be recognized for the unique talents, skills, and characteristics he/she brings to Ascend.

GENERAL POLICIES

GOALS

- 1) Work toward providing an educated populace with a strong background in mathematics, science, and technology.
- 2) Provide students with a strong college preparatory background which emphasizes innovative and unique learning experiences outside the classroom to enhance the development of the ability to move from the acquisition of facts to the process of comprehension, analysis, synthesis, application, and evaluation.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family involvement is a very significant component in assuring that Ascend is a successful experience for each student. Parents provide security, love, values, and discipline for their child. The Ascend academic programs will give the students opportunities, structure, and materials with which to learn and grow.

We ask that all parents attend at least one School Board Meeting, School Accountability Meeting, School Field Trip, or School Community Service Trip each year. Attending these meetings and/or events is a great way to stay up to date on school events and provides an avenue for parental involvement

Together, the faculty and staff work with parents to help students reach their highest potential. This is achieved by requiring a family commitment as part of the decision to attend and remain at Ascend. This commitment is enhanced by a continuing and good relationship with the home and the family. Important aspects of parental support include encouraging and enforcing appropriate student behavior, monitoring schoolwork and grades, and keeping up with school activities and information.

Two-way communication between the school and home is critical to student success. We will contact parents to keep them informed of their student's progress and of school events. We depend on parents to keep us informed of issues and concerns that may affect their student's ability to function effectively at school.

SPIRIT OF THE HANDBOOK

The policies set forth in this student handbook provide a reasonable guide for acceptable student behavior at Ascend College Prep and apply to all Ascend students, regardless of age. In all instances, students are expected to ask questions and exercise reasonable judgment before they take action. Student, faculty, staff, and parent comments or suggestions will be an integral part of the yearly evaluation and revision of the handbook.

In addition to the policies and procedures outlined in the handbook, all Ascend students and employees must abide by all applicable state and federal laws.

GENERAL POLICIES

COMMUNICATION OF HANDBOOK AMENDMENTS

Periodic amendments may be made to the handbook as deemed appropriate. Parents and students will be notified of amendments by email, and/or website postings prior to the implementation of new standards.

PERMISSIONS & QUESTIONS

Ascend rules and policies are designed to ensure the safety and well-being of students. Parents may not give more permission than Ascend policy allows but may give less, in which case the situation would be understood between parents and student. For example, Ascend allows students to leave campus for lunch, but parents may require the students to remain at the school. Parents should contact the Principal or Assistant Principal if questions arise.

While much thought and discussion has gone into the development of student policies, it is impossible to address every issue that may arise. Rather than assuming that intended actions will be acceptable, students have a responsibility to **ask before acting**.

ENROLLMENT

All interested students and his/her parents must complete the *Intent to Enroll Form* to be considered for admission. Enrollment is done on a first-come, first-served basis, beginning in January of each year. Upon confirmation of enrollment, the student has a reserved place as a student at Ascend. If for any reason the student is not able to attend Ascend at the start of the fall semester, he/she must contact the Registrar immediately and state in writing that he/she will not be attending Ascend. Once a student declines the offer to attend, his/her invitation is void and the space is offered to a student on the waitlist.

Students are discouraged from multiple enrollment moves. Completing their junior and senior year at Ascend is ideal. Students who withdraw from Ascend, attend another high school, and then wish to return to Ascend must coordinate with the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Ascend does not accept any students mid-year.

GENERAL POLICIES

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Prohibitions

No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students. Ascend College Prep prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students and school employees. Ascend will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or other school employees.

- (1) Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic* or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that, takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on school provided transportation, and that:
- (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. For the purposes of this section, "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Conduct described in subsection (1) is considered bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

*Bullying or harassing behavior includes cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is bullying or harassing behavior that occurs electronically. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct materially disrupts classwork or involves substantial disorder or invasion of the rights of others.

No person shall engage in any act of retaliation or reprisal against a victim, witness, or any person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying.

Procedures for Reporting, Investigating, and Addressing Bullying or Harassing Behavior

A student who feels he/she has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior and/or a student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to a school employee, who shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Principal and Assistant Principal. Students should report bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee promptly but no later than five (5) working days after the alleged incident(s) occurred.

GENERAL POLICIES

Reports should include: the name of the reporting person*, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name(s) of the victim(s) of the misconduct, the name(s) of any witness(es), the name(s) of the alleged bully, and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the report.

*If a student chooses to anonymously report bullying or harassing behavior, the school's ability to take action based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.

A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall immediately report the incident in writing to the Principal. Reports against the Principal shall immediately be made in writing to the Board President.

The school administration will investigate reported incidents of bullying within five (5) working days of receiving the report.

The school administration will speak to the alleged victim and alleged bully separately. Students may submit evidence for the school administration to review and a list of witnesses for the school administration to speak with. Students should preserve evidence of bullying/cyberbullying and/or harassing behavior.

All teachers, employees, volunteers, and students shall fully cooperate with the investigation and answer truthfully all inquiries relative thereto.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school administration will immediately notify the alleged victim and alleged bully regarding the outcome of the investigation and/or what discipline actions and/or other appropriate actions will be taken, if warranted.

The school administration will provide notice of an incident of bullying and the outcome of the investigation and/or what discipline actions and/or other appropriate actions will be taken, if warranted, within a reasonable amount of time to a parent or guardian of the victim and a parent or guardian of the bully not to exceed five (5) working days after the completion of the investigation.

Ascend recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. "Reasonable action" includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a school employee and student's use of reasonable self-defense.

If, after an investigation, a student is found to be a victim of bullying, such student shall not face disciplinary action on the understanding that the student's use of reasonable self-defense was in response to the bullying.

Discipline for bullying of a student with disabilities shall comply with the applicable requirements under federal law including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USCS Section 1400 et seq.)

GENERAL POLICIES

A student who is a victim of or a witness to bullying or who engages in bullying may speak to the school counselor regarding issues with bullying and harassment. The counselor will provide recommendations and guidance to the student and family about additional options as appropriate.

Ascend will provide the victim of bullying with a plan of action that includes appropriate interventions and support to help restore a positive school environment for the victim.

The procedure for reporting bullying will also be posted on the Ascend website. False accusations or reports of bullying are prohibited and may warrant disciplinary action.

Any perceived criminal conduct will be immediately reported to law enforcement.

GENERAL POLICIES

ANTI-HARASSMENT

General statement of policy

Ascend College Prep is committed to providing all students and adults with a safe and supportive school environment. Members of the school community are expected to treat each other with mutual respect.

Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination as well as disrespectful behavior, which will not be tolerated. It is the policy of Ascend College Prep to oppose and prohibit, without qualification, unlawful harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, gender or disability.

Any unlawful harassment of a member of the school community by another member of the school community is a violation of this policy.

Ascend College Prep shall act to investigate all complaints of harassment, formal or informal, verbal or written, and to discipline or take other appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy.

Definitions

School Community includes but is not limited to all students, administration, faculty, staff, unpaid volunteers and other visitors.

Harassment means verbal or physical conduct based on an individual's actual or perceived race, religion, color, national origin, marital status, gender or disability and which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Harassment can include any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, which offends, denigrates, or belittles any individual because of any of the characteristics described above. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to unsolicited derogatory remarks, jokes, demeaning comments or behavior, slurs, mimicking, name calling, graffiti, innuendo, gestures, physical contact, stalking, threatening, bullying, extorting or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures.

Examples of specific types of prohibited harassment are listed below.

- **Disability Harassment** includes harassment based on a person's disabling mental or physical condition and includes any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition, such as imitating manner of speech or movement, or interference with necessary equipment.
- **Marital Status Harassment.** Harassment on the basis of marital status is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's marital status, such as comments regarding pregnancy or being an unwed mother or father.

GENERAL POLICIES

- **National Origin Harassment** may include unwelcome, verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin, such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language, or ethnic slurs.
- **Peer Harassment** includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome attention from peers or other individuals and includes such actions as name calling, threatening gestures, unwanted physical contact, vandalism of personal property, and filing a false complaint.
- **Racial and Color Harassment** can include unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, comments on manner of speaking, and negative references to racial customs.
- **Religious Harassment** may include verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's religion or creed, such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious clothing, religious slurs, or graffiti.
- **Sexual Harassment** means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - (A) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or an individual's employment.
 - (B) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that individual.
 - (C) The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

This applies whether the harassment is between people of the same or different gender. Sexual harassment can include unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at or related to a person's gender, such as sexual gossip or personal comments of a sexual nature, sexually suggestive or foul language, sexual jokes, whistling, spreading rumors, or lies of a sexual nature about someone, demanding sexual favors, forcing sexual activity by threat of punishment or offer of educational reward, obscene graffiti, display or sending of pornographic pictures or objects, offensive touching, pinching, grabbing, kissing or hugging or restraining someone's movement in a sexual way. This behavior refers to any Ascend employee or student.

GENERAL POLICIES

Retaliation

It is a separate and distinct violation of this policy for any member of the school community to retaliate against any person who reports alleged harassment or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment. It is possible that an alleged harasser may be found to have violated this anti-retaliation provision even if the underlying complaint of harassment is not found to be a violation of this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment and may be redressed through application of the same reporting, investigation, and enforcement procedures as for harassment. In addition, a person who knowingly makes a false report may be subject to the same action that Ascend College Prep may take against any other individual who violated this policy. The term “false report” refers only to those made in bad faith and does not include a complaint that could not be corroborated, or which did not rise to the level of unlawful harassment.

Consequences

Any school employee or student who is found to have violated this policy may be subject to action including, but not limited to, warning, remedial training, education or counseling, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, termination, or discharge.

Reporting

Students believing they are a victim of any form of harassment should immediately report the incident(s) to the administration or a school employee. Any school employee, who observes, overhears or otherwise witnesses harassment, which may be unlawful, or to whom such harassment is reported, must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the harassment and to prevent its recurrence. In the event the school employee is unable to personally take prompt action, he or she is required to report the incident or complaint in writing to an administrator.

Ascend College Prep is committed to protecting the safety and welfare of its students. Mandatory reporting laws require persons to report to various agencies, including, but not limited to, Child Protection Services and/or law enforcement, when there is reason to suspect abuse, neglect, exploitation, human trafficking, sexual involvement of a student and teacher, sex crimes against a minor, unlawful activity which occurs on educational property or during a school related activity, and/or other violations of state and/or federal law which are required to be reported. Suspected violations shall/will be reported as required by law and in accordance with the applicable reporting procedures.

In addition to the above, Ascend College Prep may contact law enforcement regarding other suspected violations of municipal, state, and/or federal law.

GENERAL POLICIES

SECRET SOCIETIES/GANG ACTIVITY

It is unlawful to organize fraternities, sororities, or secret societies at Ascend. It is also unlawful for a public school student to be a member of, belong to, or participate in such organizations, and to solicit student membership in such organizations. Students in violation of this policy are subject to suspension or expulsion.

Schools governed by the Colorado Department Education are committed to maintaining a safe school environment for their students and staff. Students are expected to adhere to the school standards of conduct that promote well- being and support the learning process. Gang activity will not be tolerated in any form. Gang-related activities in the school, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities are prohibited.

Gang activity, which initiates, promotes, or advocates activities that threaten the safety or well being of persons or property on school grounds or which disrupts the school environment are harmful to the educational process. The use of hand signals, graffiti, or the presence of apparel, jewelry, accessory, or manner of grooming which, by virtue of color, arrangement, trademark, symbol, or any other attribute which implies membership or affiliation with such a group, presents a clear and present danger and is to be discouraged by school officials. Students displaying interest, involvement, or affiliation with a gang shall be subject to disciplinary action and will be encouraged to seek involvement in authorized school organizations to enhance self-esteem and promote activity that can have a positive impact on the student.

NONDISCRIMINATION

Several federal laws prohibit discrimination in educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age. The same laws require that schools receiving federal funds provide notice to all faculty, staff, and students of the protections afforded by these laws.

Ascend College Prep does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability in the provision of educational programs and services or employment opportunities and benefits.

It is the policy of Ascend to comply with all provisions of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Carl Perkins Act of 1984, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1983, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Ascend requires that students and their parents notify the Registrar in writing immediately if the home address, phone number, or email changes during the year. This is essential for use in emergency situations and to allow parents to receive report cards and informational mailings. The Registrar will make the necessary changes in the primary student database.

GENERAL POLICIES

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

During times of campus emergencies and/or emergencies due to inclement weather or other causes across the state, Ascend administration will not release a student to leave school premises until it has been determined that conditions are safe for travel to his/her destination. In this case, notification will be sent by phone and email through an automated system. When it is safe to return to campus, a follow-up message will be sent.

In rare cases the Principal may authorize early dismissal in order to avoid a dangerous weather situation. In this case, parents will need to authorize their student to leave early via email or text. Students who are not authorized to leave early will stay at Ascend until their parents release them to drive home.

If the campus is placed in “lockdown” in accordance with the school’s Emergency Management Plan, students will not be allowed to leave their assigned area until the Principal or designee is advised by the cooperating emergency authority of an “all clear” status. Parents/guardians are expected to cooperate with school administration when lockdown is imposed to ensure the safety of the Ascend community.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The administration, faculty, and staff at Ascend respect the right of privacy of the members of the student body. This guiding principle does not apply when disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to an individual or another member(s) of the Ascend family, or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed, or when a member of the administration, faculty, or staff becomes aware that an individual is making self-destructive choices.

Only information that is directly relevant to the purpose of which the disclosure is made should be revealed on a “need to know” basis pursuant to State and Federal law.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Ascend College Prep will protect the confidentiality of all previous or currently enrolled students with regard to information contained in its records as prescribed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s educational records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days after the day Ascend receives a request for access.

GENERAL POLICIES

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the Principal (or his/her designee) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or the eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the Principal (or their designee), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent(s) of eligible students when notified of the right to a hearing. If, as a result of the hearing, the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth his or her views.

The right to provide written consent before the school disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school and/or the Colorado Department of Education as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Colorado Board of Education. A school official may also include a volunteer or a person, company, consultant or other party or contractor with whom the school and/or Colorado Department of Education has outsourced to perform an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district or college in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

Any disciplinary actions affecting attendance are included in the student's permanent record and cumulative folder. The school will forward education records, including disciplinary

GENERAL POLICIES

records, to other schools or colleges in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

The school may disclose directory information about students without consent. Directory information means information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade level, enrollment status, dates of attendance, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height or members of athletic teams, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The school may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student under certain conditions set forth in the FERPA regulations. Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to, the student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

The school is required to provide military recruiters names, addresses, and telephone listings of secondary students, unless the parent has opted-out of the disclosure. The parent or eligible student has the right to refuse to let the school designate any or all types of information about the student as directory information. The parent or eligible student must notify the Principal in writing within 14 days of receipt of this notice that he or she does not want any or all of those types of information about the student designated as directory information or disclosed to military recruiters.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

Confidentiality

Ascend College Prep respects the privacy rights of all its constituents. This policy does not apply when disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to an individual or the school community, or when legal requirements demand confidential information be revealed, or when it becomes clear to the faculty or staff that an individual is making self-destructive choices. This includes, but is not limited to, threats of suicide, child abuse, pregnancy, communicable or fatal diseases, eating disorders, substance abuse, self-mutilation, etc.

GENERAL POLICIES

RESPECT FOR PERSONS, PROPERTY, AND PRIVACY

Students are expected to be fully and always respectful of other people, including faculty, staff, other students, and guests on campus. Examples of inappropriate behavior that might violate this expectation include:

1. Use of language not deemed respectful or in good taste.
2. Engaging in inappropriate physical contact or improper demonstrations of affection or attraction.
3. Any form of harassment, hazing, or bullying, whether verbal or nonverbal.
4. Taking any property without the owner's express consent. This is considered theft. This policy includes the access to contents of backpacks or bags without specific permission to do so. The cost of willful damage to School property will be charged to a student's personal account.
5. Any form of vandalism or abuse of the School's or another's personal property. Trespassing on property not owned by the School is also a violation of this standard. The cost of willful damage to School property will be charged to a student's personal account.
6. Violating any federal, state, or local laws.
7. Engaging in behavior that jeopardizes the welfare or good nature of the School or any members of the School community.
8. Engaging in certain activities outside of School hours or off School property. This may result in loss of School privileges or other disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Examples of such outside conduct are: violations of laws; underage purchase of alcohol; drug use, sale or possession; or use or misuse of digital content which does, or could compromise the welfare of any member of the School community or the reputation or function for the School.

FREE SPEECH, ASSEMBLY, AND PUBLICATION

Students are entitled to freedom of expression and publication of their views and opinions as long as the expression does not disrupt and/or interfere with normal school operations and discipline. Profane, vulgar, racist, or harassing words by their nature disrupt the educational environment and may not be used. Students are responsible, when assembling, for exhibiting appropriate behavior and following the reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions of the school.

SECTION 504 – RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. No discrimination against any person with a disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school. To ensure the school's compliance with Section 504, as it applies to students with disabilities, the following procedures have been adopted.

1. The 504 Coordinator and counselor will seek to detect, by examining the records of current and incoming students, such conditions that might be substantially debilitating as described in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If the school has reason to believe that a student has a disability which substantially limits the student's major life functions the school shall convene a team of people who are knowledgeable of the student's educational needs to review and consider all pertinent information related to the suspected disability. The meeting shall be convened within seven (7) working days after the school receives a written statement describing the specific discriminatory conduct, or the school becomes aware of the student's disability affecting a major life function.
2. The 504 Committee will consist of the Principal and/or the Assistant Principal and at least two faculty members. Involvement and input from parents and students will be sought and welcomed. The team described in the paragraph above shall determine whether the student is disabled under Section 504 and whether that disability substantially limits a major life function.
3. If such a determination is made, the team must further determine what reasonable accommodations are required on behalf of the school to allow the student an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities. This committee shall render its conclusions and recommendations in writing within seven (7) working days of the meeting. If the student's parents disagree with Ascend College Prep's decision, the parents shall be informed of their right to ask for an impartial hearing to decide the matter.
4. Hearing request shall be made in writing to Ascend giving specific reasons describing the discriminatory actions by the school and why the school's accommodations are not appropriate.
5. An impartial hearing shall be held within 30 calendar days of receipt of the written request. The school shall obtain as a hearing officer an individual who is not an employee of the home school district, has no conflict of interest, and who is knowledgeable of Section 504. The parent and student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent them at their own expense.
6. The hearing officer shall conduct the hearing so as to give the parents an opportunity to present evidence supporting their claim that their child has been subjected to discriminatory treatment in violation of Section 504. The school shall be given the opportunity to present evidence supporting its position with respect to the student.

GENERAL POLICIES

The school will make a tape recording of the hearing and a copy of the tape will be provided for the parents upon written request. The impartial hearing will be informal with the hearing officer controlling the flow of information from each party. For example, the hearing officer could ask the parties to make statements and present their evidence without resorting to attorneys conducting direct examination, cross examination, opening statements, closing arguments, etc. Each party shall bear his or her own costs for duplication of written evidence and such evidence may be stipulated into the record by agreement.

7. The hearing officer shall make a decision within seven (7) working days after the conclusion of the hearing. The decision shall be given in writing to the home school district's 504 coordinator and the parents. If either is aggrieved by the action of the hearing officer, an appeal may be taken to the State Superintendent of Education, or designee.
8. The State Superintendent of Education, or designee, will conduct a review of the written record within seven (7) working days of receiving the request or review. The State Superintendent of Education, or designee, may overrule, modify, or uphold the decision of the hearing officer. A decision will be made within seven (7) working days of beginning deliberations on the matter and the State Superintendent of Education, or designee, shall provide a written response to both parties. The decision of the State Superintendent, or designee, is final. Ascend shall publish its policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of disability and shall inform parents of their rights under Section 504, including the right to examine records relevant to their child and the right to an impartial hearing. The school's review procedure will also be made available upon request.

MENTAL HEALTH

The safety and wellbeing of students are of the utmost importance to Ascend. In addition to physical maladies, Ascend recognizes that students may also have mental health concerns. Some of these concerns may be typical, transitional issues to the academic rigors. Others may be of a more severe and long-term nature. Regardless of the specific concerns, Ascend always attempts to make reasonable and appropriate measures to accommodate students on an individual basis in the least restrictive environment.

Under any circumstance, Ascend will seek to act in the best interest of the affected student and the general student population. Decisions will not be made in isolation, and parents/guardians, school counselors, and outside mental health professionals may all be consulted along with the student in determining the most reasonable and appropriate action according to the circumstances.

WITHDRAWAL

Types of Withdrawal

- **Behavioral** – for students who fail to meet behavioral expectations and standards.
- **Voluntary** – for students who feel their academic needs, personal needs, and/or interests would best be met in another learning environment.

Procedures

- When exiting Ascend, all students must complete a Withdrawal Form which may be obtained from the Registrar. This form must be completed in its entirety. Once completed, this form and the student's cumulative folder will be mailed or emailed to the student's new school.
- All Ascend textbooks must be returned to the Assistant Principal who will ensure that all issued items have been returned.
- The Withdrawal Form will be reviewed by the Principal who will note any discrepancies and discuss any charges.
- Students taking courses for dual credit or dual enrollment must withdraw from UCCS so students do not receive a failing grade on their college transcript due to improper procedures.

A student who has withdrawn is prohibited from returning to the campus or to any school function without the approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal.

GENERAL POLICIES

DRESS AND GROOMING

Dress and grooming standards are established to ensure that the school climate reflects decency, safety, appropriateness, and a serious focus on learning. We recognize that fashions, styles, and trends evolve; therefore, the school reserves authority in matters which may arise and are not identified within this policy. Ascend staff reserves the right to request that students change if attire is deemed inappropriate or potentially disruptive to the educational process. The final authority regarding proper dress and grooming shall be the Principal.

The following standards must be followed AT ALL TIMES:

- 1) Appropriate undergarments must be worn and should not be visible.
- 2) Footwear must be worn at all times. **Slippers are not appropriate footwear.**
- 3) Clothing may not contain slogans or images which are considered profane or vulgar, or promote tobacco products, alcohol, drugs, or gang affiliation, or considered insensitive to race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity or gender.
- 4) Clothing considered sleepwear/loungewear may not be worn.
- 5) Clothing must provide adequate covering.
- 6) Shorts must have an inseam of at least 4 inches.
- 7) Clothing, wigs, face paint and other items of attire that could be classified as “costumes” are not appropriate for general school wear.

A higher standard of dress may also be required for certain events.

Learning to wear appropriate attire is important to every student’s social development and in many instances their future success.

GENERAL POLICIES

MEDIA POLICY

All news releases, newsletters, public service announcements, publicity, promotional brochures, advertising, graphics, photography, etc. will be originated, produced, disseminated, and/or approved by the Assistant Principal. All employees, students, clubs, and organizations affiliated with Ascend College Prep are expected to comply.

Students and faculty are welcome to create social media pages for clubs, the incoming junior class, activities, etc. across a multitude of platforms. However, before creating these accounts, students and faculty need to first notify the Assistant Principal to make sure previous accounts have not already been created for said club, activity, etc. The purpose behind this is to avoid an excessive amount of accounts for the same organization.

All school-related social media accounts that require an email and password to sign-up must be created by the Assistant Principal. No social media accounts are to be created using personal or private email addresses.

Because Facebook requires adding individual people to a page rather than logging into the page's account, the Club Sponsor, Club President, and Assistant Principal must be added as administrators.

FUNDRAISING

All student fundraising projects must be submitted to the Ascend sponsor of the organization. If approved by the Ascend sponsor, the sponsor will coordinate with the Principal or Assistant Principal as appropriate. Final approval rests with the Principal. Requests should be submitted a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance of the proposed activity. All funds raised must be reported and received in compliance with state law and sound accounting practices.

Fundraising projects must not conflict with the goals of Ascend.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Student clubs and organizations must be approved by the Assistant Principal, with authority for final approval resting with the Principal. Clubs should be consistent with the philosophy, rules, and regulations of Ascend. No club or organization shall be considered for approval unless an Ascend employee has agreed to serve as sponsor. The club sponsor must be present throughout all meetings and club-sponsored events.

GENERAL POLICIES

FIELD TRIPS and NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED GROUP TRIPS

Field trips are an important extension of the Ascend experience. With this privilege comes responsibility to behave appropriately at all times. While on field trips, the administrator, teachers, or staff member in charge will communicate expectations designed to promote orderliness and safety. It is also understood that all policies of this handbook follow field trip participants and are in force during their travels. Violators will be referred to an administrator.

Teachers or staff members may organize and sponsor trips to various parts of the country and to foreign countries, provided that the trips occur at a time other than regularly scheduled school days for students and workdays for teachers and staff members. The guidelines below are intended to ensure that such trips are organized as private activities and are not Ascend-sponsored events.

- Trip sponsors must not use school vehicles or materials and supplies, including Ascend letterhead and the Ascend network, for recruitment, communication or publicity purposes. Sponsors should clarify to parents and the media that the trips are private undertakings.
- Contractual forms signed by parents or guardians should include a statement that acknowledges that Ascend is not a sponsoring organization and is not responsible in any way for financial loss, physical injury, or any other events that might occur.
- Contractual agreements entered into with travel agencies or other organizing persons or authorities should state that the trip sponsors are acting on their own initiative and not as representatives of Ascend.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

Ascend College Prep recognizes the unique values, needs, and talents of all students. The educational program at Ascend is designed to challenge each student based on individual capabilities, background, interests in certain curricular areas, and college requirements.

The curriculum at Ascend provides students with the foundation needed for successful post-secondary academic and career pursuits. The total instructional program is integrated in such a way that students do not perceive content information as isolated and fragmented but understand the interrelatedness of all learning. The instructional climate is conducive to recognizing entry level skills and abilities of each student and then allowing them to progress to reach their maximum potential.

The faculty and administration at ACP bring diverse talents and superior teaching skills to the college preparatory instructional program. Faculty are encouraged to draw upon their creative abilities to seek innovative approaches to instruction and techniques allowing students to develop skills in critical thinking, problem solving, independent study, and the use of technology. Faculty members are encouraged to seek continuing professional development to remain current in their respective fields.

While the educational emphasis at Ascend is on STEM, a well-balanced curriculum is offered. Writing, research, and the use of technology are stressed in all curricular areas. By providing opportunities to integrate the arts and humanities into the sciences, it provides an appropriate platform for the application of Colorado State Standards. In addition to superlative classroom instruction, students have the opportunity to hear outstanding speakers in each discipline and to participate in internship and exploration, field trips, mentorship, and seminars.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to be academically honest, and those who engage in academic dishonesty should expect serious consequences. Cheating on assignments or tests, inappropriate/unauthorized collaboration as defined by the teacher, or committing plagiarism will not be tolerated. At a minimum, students involved in breaches of academic integrity will receive a failing grade for the assignment with the possibility of a lower or failing course grade.

All definitions of plagiarism for final papers apply to drafts as well. All ideas, words, or written work that is wholly or partially not one's own must be cited and referenced appropriately. Summaries and paraphrased material when the original work has been significantly modified also require citations according to the style used in the course.

Students should be aware that individual homework assignments, take-home-test, and other outside projects should not be completed with other students. The sharing of ideas verbal or written on these assignments may result in answers that bring into question the issue of academic dishonesty. ***For more detailed information, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy attached to the end of this handbook.***

MONITORING OF ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL PERFORMANCE

The progress of Ascend students is monitored throughout the year. Students will be placed on academic watch or probation, and academic interventions will be devised and implemented as needed. In all cases, academic watch and probation should be considered a **supportive intervention and NOT a punitive measure**.

Academic Watch may be assigned if a student:

- has earned three or more C's during a nine-week grading period;
- has earned an NC (no credit) during a nine-week grading period;
- has not worked to his/her potential as reflected by grades, attendance, and/or behavior;
- has been recommended for consideration by a faculty member or parent.

Academic Probation may be assigned if a student:

- has earned two or more failing grades during any nine-week grading period;
- has earned a semester grade of NC in one course;
- has earned one final grade of NC;
- has more than one INC (incomplete) at the end of any nine-week grading period;
- has not worked to his/her potential as reflected by grades, attendance and/or behavior;
- has been recommended for consideration by a faculty member or parent.

Students will remain on one of the intervention plans for a minimum of 2 weeks. Students who are not performing up to expectations and/or who are on academic probation will have specific strategies developed to assist in their progress which may include, but are not limited to:

- assignment to required seminar tutoring periods;
- assignment to required at home study hours, documented and supported by parents;
- curtailment of social and/or extracurricular activities;
- development of a plan of improvement.

Probation Policies and Conditions

Students and parents/guardians of students placed on probation will be notified in writing.

Students on probation will have a contract listing future expectations that must be met by the student. The contract is signed by the student, parents/guardians, and the appropriate administrator. Multiple copies of the contract will be made and distributed to the student, parents/guardians, and faculty. A copy will also be placed in the student's academic file.

FRIDAY PROGRAMMING

Students must attend all scheduled Fridays. Absences will only be excused on a case-by-case basis. Students excused from Friday activities are responsible for obtaining information and/or assignments received. While many Friday activities take place outside the school, they are all part of the state approved academic time. Make-up assignments may be required for students who miss Friday activities.

REMOTE LEARNING DAYS

Throughout the school year, Ascend College Prep may utilize remote learning days in lieu of canceling school for weather or other emergency situations. Remote learning days will operate on a delayed schedule, with shortened classes, but these days are required school days and the standard attendance policy applies.

On a remote learning day students will be required to visually check in with their teacher at the beginning of each class period via the teacher's GoogleMeet link, which is found in their Google Classroom. All classwork assigned on remote days will be due at the end of the class period in order to receive credit and be counted present for that class.

ASSESSMENTS

State Testing Program

Juniors will take the CMAS Science exam their junior year as well as the PSAT/NMSQT and the Colorado SAT (CO SAT). Ascend College Prep will administer the PSAT in October of a student's junior year and the CO SAT in April of their junior year.

Seniors will take the ACT during the Fall of their senior year. This is an optional test for Seniors and the cost of this test falls to the student/parents. No additional state-level assessments will be required or offered.

Beginning and end-of-year Assessments

Student's initial level of specific course material knowledge will be evaluated via a pre-test at the beginning of the academic year. This same test will be given at the end of the first semester and the end of the academic year in order to determine individual student growth in the content area. Results of these assessments will be presented to the Board and the BOCES at the end of each semester, and will inform the Unified Improvement Plan required by the CDE.

All students will also be given a survey at the beginning of the year to gauge their perspective on their college and career readiness. This survey will include self-assessments of time-management, study habits and overall subject aptitude. Students will take this same survey at the end of each semester and their responses will be kept in their student record. Student perceptions of growth, college and career readiness, time-management and content knowledge will all be captured as another metric for school goals.

Placement Tests

Once enrolled, students without the appropriate pre-requisite courses may be asked to take a placement test in order to add certain courses to their schedule. These tests will be at the discretion of the Principal, in coordination with school faculty.

ATTENDANCE & TARDIES

School attendance is a critical factor in student success, and it has been an area of concern for Ascend College prep, across Colorado, and across the U.S. Each year we are audited on our attendance data as well as our policies and procedures.

We will always communicate openly with parents about student absences and will do our best to ensure that your student complies with all applicable school and state truancy laws. According to state law, only school administrators may deem an absence “excused” and students are considered habitually truant after four (4) unexcused absences in one month, or ten (10) unexcused absences in a school year. Once a student has been deemed “habitually truant”, the school can begin a truancy case. (CRS 22-33-104) Parents are not able to excuse any absence, but advance notice and open communication will allow for the best possible classification of the absence.

Students are expected to communicate individually with their teachers any time that they are absent, regardless of the reason for their absence. Students should use email or Remind to communicate in these situations. Parents are required to communicate via the attendance email (attendance@ascendcollegeprep.com) in addition to the student communication with their teachers.

*****If a student is absent on the day of an exam, they will be given an alternate version of that exam. If the absence is unexcused they will also receive a 25% grade penalty on the missed exam. We highly recommend students are in attendance on exam days!*****

The following policy addresses mental health days that parents can opt to use for their students, illness, sports-related absences, family vacations, college visits, and the like. Please refer to each topic heading to review the policy as it relates to that type of absence.

Mental Health Days/Student Illness

The mental health and wellbeing of each student is a critical factor in their ability to be successful in school and outside activities. We will allow students to take up to three (3) excused days per semester for either illness or mental health, without a doctor’s note or further explanation. After the three allowable days, a doctor’s note will be required for the absence to be excused. Please email the attendance email account before 8:30 am on the day of the absence.

Illnesses with Longer Duration

If your student is absent more than two school days in a row for illness, a doctor’s note will be required to excuse any additional days.

Extracurricular activities

We highly encourage students to participate in athletics and other extracurricular activities during the school year, and understand that there will be times when early dismissal or an entire day of absence is required due to the athletics/activity schedule.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

We ask that all sports schedules are emailed to the attendance account as soon as they are published. We understand that schedules can change, so as soon as a change occurs, please inform the school of that change, in writing, via the attendance email. Students are expected to notify their teachers in advance of any planned absences, and athletics are no exception.

With respect to athletic practices: being present during class time is essential for student success; therefore, we will NOT excuse students early to get to practice.

Family Vacations/Family Emergencies

Due to the schedule at Ascend College Prep, there are on average two Fridays a month with no school as well as several four-day weekends in addition to week-long (+) breaks in November, December, and March. We ask that any family vacations use these times in order to minimize student absences. Family vacations will be excused on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Principal and/or Principal. For planned absences, the school needs to be notified no less than 7 days before the absence. Students will be required to make up any work missed for excused absences, and no credit will be given for work missed due to unexcused absences. Faculty members are **not** expected to spend additional time with students who *elect* to miss school.

We understand that emergencies can and will occur, so family emergencies will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the Assistant Principal/Principal. Open communication in these circumstances is critical to ensure that the student is well cared for, and the teachers are informed of the situation as soon as possible. Faculty members will work individually with students who miss school due to family emergencies.

College Visits

College visits are an integral part of a student's journey to college, and we highly encourage them! Again, due to our favorable school schedule, we ask that you attempt to schedule visits when we are not in school. However, we understand that it may not be possible, so we will excuse up to three school days for college visits. Any additional days will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the Assistant Principal/Principal.

Tardies

We understand that sometimes life happens and you will be late. But it is important to remember that when students arrive late to class they disrupt the class, the learning of other students and the teacher's plan for the day. It is important for students to learn to be on time. In order to foster this skill, the following policy applies to Tardies:

- Students who arrive late due to doctor's appointments, or the like, will be excused as long as they provide a note from the doctor/provider.
- If there is another legitimate reason for tardy (not that the student overslept, alarm didn't go off, etc) we will evaluate the reason and may excuse the tardy.
- Each student is allowed 2 "life happens" tardies and 3 parent excusals each semester that will NOT count against them. No reason must be given for these tardies.

Tardy Consequences

Once a student has exhausted their 2 free tardies and their 3 parent excusals in a semester, all tardies after that will be considered unexcused.

Once a student earns 3 **unexcused** tardies in a semester, the following consequences apply:

- The student will be given a **before school detention** for the day following their third unexcused tardy. Before school detention begins at 8:00am. Students who are tardy to before school detention will be given another before school detention the following day.
- The student will earn before school detention for each subsequent unexcused tardy.
- Any homework due the day the student arrives tardy will be counted late. All late work received a 10% grade penalty.
- If there is a quiz or test the day the student arrives tardy to class they will receive a 10% late penalty, even if the assessment hasn't started when they arrive.

Attendance & Tardy Reporting Procedures:

In the event that your student is absent or tardy for any reason, please follow the following procedures:

1. Email the attendance email address (attendance@ascendcollegeprep.com) as soon as you know your student will be absent.
2. In order for a same-day absence to be excused, the parent must email the school prior to 9:00 a.m.
3. Seven (7) day advance notice is required for any planned absences.
4. Sports schedules need to be emailed to the email addresses listed in #1 above as soon as they are received. All sports schedules will be verified with the respective schools and/or coaches prior to absences being excused.
5. Doctor's notes/documentation will be required for any illness longer than two (2) days in a row for the absence to be excused.

CELLULAR PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cellular phones and other electronic devices may not be used for spoken and/or text communication while inside the classroom. Students are advised to inform family members and friends of their class schedule so that phone communication can be scheduled outside of class/study time. In case of emergency during the academic day a parent or guardian should call the office (719-368-6936) and ask that the student call home immediately. Students are requested to respect the rights of others by turning off all electronic devices during Friday activities.

Student cell phones may be collected and held in a cell phone holder during classes. Even if cell phones are not collected, it is always considered disrespectful to use a cell phone while class is in session unless the use of these devices is specified in the lesson.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

CLASSROOM MISBEHAVIOR/TEACHER AS CLASSROOM AUTHORITY

Ascend College Prep holds all students accountable for their behavior while attending class, participating in field trips, or at any period of time that the student is otherwise representing Ascend or is under the supervision and is the responsibility of the school. Classroom misbehavior includes, but may not be limited to, disrespect, disruption, failure to complete assignments in a timely manner, or noncompliance/failure to follow directions. When an incident occurs that cannot be immediately solved by the instructor, the student shall be referred to the Principal/Assistant Principal.

Ascend recognizes the faculty member as the authority in classroom matters and supports the right of the instructor to remove from the classroom any student who, in the professional judgment of the teacher, is disrupting the learning environment.

The Principal shall determine the proper placement for the student, who may not be returned to the classroom until a conference of some kind has been held with the faculty member and agreements are reached that no further disruption will be tolerated. Parents, guardians or custodians may be asked to participate in these meetings if the behavior continues.

A student who causes a disruption in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities may be subject to disciplinary actions. School officials, the reporting teacher, and the student's parent will develop a behavior modification plan for a student who causes disruptions in the classroom, on school property or vehicles, or at school-related activities multiple times during the school year.

COURSE LOAD

Students should build time into each day for extracurricular activities and recreation; therefore, course selection must be carefully considered so that students are not overscheduled.

A minimum of 5 academic courses are required for all juniors and a minimum of 4 academic courses are required for all seniors each academic year, and it is recommended that students limit their academic courses to 6. Exceptions to this are assessed on an individual basis and the decision to allow extra courses rests with the Principal. Pursuit of courses that enhance preparation for a college/university major is suggested.

COURSE OFFERINGS

A course catalog, issued each spring, lists all courses that the school is prepared to offer the following academic year. Since the total enrollment of Ascend is relatively small, it may not be possible or desirable to offer all courses every year. A sufficient number of students must request a course for the course to be offered.

COURSE SYLLABI

Faculty will provide a course syllabus to each student at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus will serve as the basis of expectations between the teacher and the student. Each syllabus will state the course requirements, grading policy, grading scale, attendance policy, dates of major tests, papers and/or assignments, late work policy and any required or optional fees associated with the course. To make parents aware of course expectations, faculty will provide an electronic copy to students that they may share with their parents.

DUAL CREDIT / DUAL ENROLLMENT

Ascend offers specific English, mathematics, science, history, computer science, and social science courses on our campus through the CU Succeed program, which awards college credit to courses taken at Ascend. Students and their parents will be notified of all dual credit agreements during enrollment. Students taking dual credit courses will receive a grade on both the Ascend transcript and the transcript of the college or university awarding credit. A student who successfully completes a dual credit course will earn both high school and college credit. If a student leaves Ascend, or for any reason drops a dual credit class, it is the responsibility of the student to drop the class through the college. Failure to do so could result in an "F" on their college transcript.

All dual enrollment fees are the responsibility of the student and his/her parent or guardian.

By completing more than 29 college credit hours, a student may be considered a sophomore at some universities, and this may impact their eligibility for freshman scholarships. **This is not typical.** Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment course grades are included in respective colleges GPA and will also affect scholarships applications. Some colleges will include dual enrollment courses in a student's college GPA and some will not. The Ascend administration will work with each student to determine how their dual-enrollment courses will be treated by their college of choice.

EXEMPTION FROM FINAL EXAMINATIONS

The Ascend Academic Calendar, published in this handbook, will clearly indicate the dates during which semester exams will be given. An exam schedule will be published each semester and exams will not be given early except under extenuating circumstances (death in the family, scheduled elective surgery, etc.) with prior approval by the Principal. Exams may also not be moved between assigned periods in order to accommodate family vacations or other elective trips. This policy is consistent with how colleges approach final exams and it is not flexible. Students who do not take a final exam during the assigned period may take the exam during the make-up day with no academic penalty, but students who miss a final exam and do not make it up on the appropriate day will earn a grade of zero on the exam.

A teacher may elect to count a student performance or research project presentation (given before or during the scheduled exam period) in lieu of a final written examination. Intent to do so will be noted on the course syllabus provided to students at the beginning of the course.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

GPA AND CLASS RANK

The population of students who elect to attend Ascend College Prep is highly motivated and many are clustered near the top of the grading scale. It would neither benefit students nor clarify the character of the academic program to rank the students.

Academic transcripts will be accompanied by student test scores and a current profile of the characteristics of the Ascend student population. Transcripts will also reflect the course titles and the letter grade that the students earned in the course.

Although class rank will not be calculated or published, Ascend will calculate GPA for the purpose of college admissions, scholarships or special program admissions. GPA will be calculated on a 4.0 scale, but weighted credit will be awarded to all AP, IB and Dual-Enrollment courses, to include courses taken at Ascend and any previous schools

GRADE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE REPORTS

The following grading scale is used at Ascend College Prep for all regular high school courses. Dual Enrollment course grade scales will be determined by the instructor, but will not be more stringent than the grade scale below.

The “plus and minus” grade scale does not affect high school GPA, but it does affect dual enrollment courses. All dual-enrollment courses will receive high school weighted credit for their high school transcript and dual-enrollment GPA credit for their college transcript.

Course %	Grade	High School GPA	HS Weighted GPA	Dual-Enrollment GPA
96-100	A	4.0	5.0	4.0
89.5 - 95.9	A-	4.0	5.0	3.7
86.5 - 89.4	B+	3.0	5.0	3.3
83.5 - 86.4	B	3.0	4.0	3.0
79.5 - 83.4	B-	3.0	4.0	2.7
76.5 - 79.4	C+	2.0	4.0	2.3
73.5 - 76.4	C	2.0	3.0	2.0
69.5 - 73.4	C-	2.0	3.0	1.7
66.5 - 69.4	D+	1.0	2.0	1.3
63.5 - 66.4	D	1.0	2.0	1.0
59.5 - 63.4	D-	1.0	2.0	0.7
Below 59.5	F	0.0	0.0	0.0

GRADE CHANGES

We encourage students who are dissatisfied with grades to discuss the issue first with the instructor of the course. If not satisfied with the resolution, the student can then appeal to the Principal. No grade changes will be made after the midterm of the following quarter. Grade changes cannot be made to graduates' transcripts after the last working day in May.

Once a final course grade has been filed by the course instructor the grade may not be changed unless one of the following conditions applies:

- (1) The instructor issuing the grade finds that a clerical error has been made and writes the Principal, stating the reason for the grade change.
- (2) The grade is changed by the Principal after a successful grade challenge.
- (3) The instructor changes a grade of incomplete

GRADE REPLACEMENT

If a student chooses to repeat a course it is possible, but not guaranteed, that the grade in the repeated course may replace the previous grade for the purpose of GPA calculation. For this to occur, the student must make the request in writing to the Principal.

GRADUATION

Students meeting all Ascend graduation requirements are awarded a diploma. Under no circumstances will a diploma be awarded to a student who has not successfully completed the requirements particular to ACP. Students who withdraw from Ascend for any reason, or who are dismissed or expelled, will not receive a diploma, even if all state graduation requirements have been met.

**ASCEND ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR
GRADUATION CLASSES OF 2025, 2026, & 2027**

With very few exceptions, each student must be enrolled in an English, history/social science, mathematics, and science course each semester.

The following courses are required for Ascend graduation **with a STEM endorsement**, but credit may be earned prior to enrollment at Ascend. Students meeting any of these requirements before enrolling at Ascend will complete additional academic courses or elective courses to earn the required credits at Ascend.

CURRICULUM AREA	CREDITS
ENGLISH & HUMANITIES	4
MATHEMATICS	4
SCIENCE	4
SOCIAL SCIENCES	4
STEM OPTION	1.0
COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY	0.5
HEALTH	0.5
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	0.5
FOREIGN LANGUAGE*	2
INDEPENDENT OPTION**	0.5 - 1.0
OTHER ELECTIVES***	7.5 - 8.0
TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED	29

The following courses are required for Ascend graduation.

CURRICULUM AREA	CREDITS
ENGLISH	4
MATHEMATICS	3
SCIENCE	3
SOCIAL SCIENCES	4
STEM OPTION	1.0
COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY	0.5
HEALTH	0.5
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	0.5
FOREIGN LANGUAGE*	1.0
INDEPENDENT OPTION**	0.5 - 1.0
OTHER ELECTIVES***	7.5 - 8.0
TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED	26

*computer science programming may fulfill one credit of foreign language

**students enrolling for only their senior year will only need 0.5 credits

***students enrolling for only their senior year will need 8.0 credits

INCOMPLETE WORK

An INC will be given only in extenuating circumstances. If extenuating circumstances cannot be documented the teacher shall assign a grade of zero (0) for incomplete work. An “INC” indicates that the student has been unable to complete the requirements for the course by the end of the grading period due to illness, accident, or other circumstance beyond his/her control. In such situations, a grade of INC shall be assigned and a final exam shall not be given until all work has been completed. A student with an INC will be expected to meet with his/her teacher and counselor to develop a contract and timeline for completing the unfinished work in an expedient manner.

Guidelines for converting an “INC” to a permanent grade:

- An incomplete assignment at first nine-weeks or third nine-weeks must be designated as complete with a grade within the first four weeks of the next grading period.
- For courses ending first semester, an INC may only be recorded with the approval of the Principal.
- For courses ending second semester, an INC earned by a junior must be designated as complete with a grade by the close of day June 15th.
- **Seniors must remove all INCs by the close of day on the last day of finals of spring semester to be eligible to participate in graduation exercises.**

INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

It is the intention of Ascend to provide reasonable opportunities for participation in interscholastic sports at other public schools but Ascend does not grant academic credit for participation in varsity athletics.

MAKE-UP WORK

When absence is prearranged: Students with excused absences from class are expected to make up any test, homework, class work, projects, or labs missed. Students knowing in advance that they will miss class for an excused purpose are required to get their assignments in advance and are responsible for missed work on the day of their return. Papers and projects due during a planned absence must be turned in on the assigned day or they will be subject to a late penalty. Students in attendance on days that tests or assignments are announced are expected to submit the work or take the test prior to their absence or immediately (first day) upon return, at the discretion of the teacher.

When absence is unplanned: **It is the student’s responsibility to arrange for make-up work on the day of his/her return to class.** If the student misses only one class period, he/she has, at the discretion of the teacher, up to 2 days from the day of absence to complete the make-up work assigned during his/her absence. If the student misses two or more consecutive classes for a course, make-up time for work assigned during his/her absence is to be arranged with the teacher. **Students cannot wait until the end of a grading period to complete make-up work.** A grade of zero (0) shall be assigned when a student fails to make up work within the time period allowed.

LATE WORK POLICY

- Assignments not submitted when asked for by the instructor will be assessed a 10% late penalty. (*This applies even if you turn it in by the end of the period!*)
- If an assignment is turned in any time the following day (not lesson!) it will be accepted with a 10% late penalty. To clarify, anything turned in within 24 hours of the deadline can still earn 90% of the available credit!
- If an assignment is turned in two days late it will be accepted with a 50% late penalty. To clarify, anything turned in within 48 hours of the deadline can still earn 50% of the available credit.
 - Assignments may be submitted electronically in order to meet the time deadline
 - Hard copies (when required) may be turned in during your next class.
- If an assignment is turned in more than two days late it will not receive any credit, but the instructor may still mandate its completion.

Example: You have class 2nd period on Thursday and you don't turn in your homework. If it is turned in before 11:59 pm on Friday there will be a 10% late penalty. If it is turned in after that, but before 11:59 pm on Saturday, there will be a 50% late penalty. If you turn it anytime after 11:59 pm on Saturday it will not receive any credit.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Students sign up for courses primarily based on freedom of choice. The school hires teachers, plans facilities, and develops the master schedule around these choices. Therefore, schedule changes will not be considered to enable students to choose teachers or specific periods. Schedule change requests must be submitted, in writing, to the Principal. Students must follow their schedule until notified in writing of the change.

Dropping a Course

Students may be allowed to drop courses from their schedules during the first three weeks of each semester if they are experiencing academic difficulty or at the recommendation of the course instructor.

Students are not allowed to drop courses that result in a class load of less than 5 courses. Seniors are advised that dropping a course may impact scholarship status and are encouraged to check with prospective college/university admissions offices for more detail.

NOTE: UCCS follows a different drop/add calendar which must be followed by Ascend students who enroll in UCCS courses.

Adding a Course

On a space-available basis, students wishing to add courses to their schedules have two weeks at the beginning of each semester to do so. Going beyond two weeks puts students at a disadvantage and may jeopardize the work in other classes students are taking.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

SEMESTER EXAMS

Semester exam dates are published prior to the beginning of the academic year. These days are included in the Ascend academic calendar to meet the required number of days for student attendance; consequently, students are expected to take exams as scheduled and to be in attendance until all exams are completed. Parents are expected to schedule family celebrations, travel, etc. so as not to overlap with semester exams. See additional details in the section on Final Exams.

SPECIAL TOPICS ELECTIVES

Independent Study: Colorado State Standards will be determined on an individual basis after students select their independent study/elective. All students enrolling in an independent study will complete the required paperwork to design and evaluate their course. A faculty advisor will oversee all students participating in an independent study program to monitor their progress and assist, as needed.

Work Study: Students participating in the work-study program will receive high school elective credit for work done at a job. They must provide the school with a letter from their employer and there will be academic activities tied to successful completion of a work-study problem. Examples include journaling, interviews, research into career progression and budgeting around estimated earnings.

Internship: Students interested in participating in an internship will have the responsibility of researching companies they are interested in and a faculty member will assist them with their search as needed. Students who have not already arranged an internship may tentatively schedule one for the Spring semester and then use seminar time to work with their advisor to secure a position. Similar to the work study, there will be academic activities tied to successful completion of an internship.

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are the property of Ascend and are provided without cost for student use while enrolled at the school. It is imperative that students exercise care in using textbooks. Books lost or damaged must be paid for by the student responsible.

Assessment of fines

When use of a textbook has been completed, each student's book shall be carefully evaluated by the teacher. The teacher shall note, in the textbook record, the condition of the returned book. Fines should be charged to students for unnecessary damage to books, or failure to return a book.

DISCIPLINE

PHILOSOPHY

To develop a strong sense of community, expectations are a necessary framework within which a sense of closeness, cooperation, sharing, enjoyment, and a feeling of belonging can emerge. All groups find comfort in establishing standards or rules which help guide the behavior of their members. Ascend recognizes the need for such rules and also understands the value of defining possible consequences in the event those rules are disregarded.

The willful or inadvertent disregard for school rules implies a need for learning proper conduct. Learning correct action or behavior is brought about through the use of natural, predetermined consequences. The consequence is intended to reasonably fit the seriousness of the violation and ultimately to change behavior. To this end, three levels of violations and corresponding consequences have been developed. **Level I violations** will be minor infractions that are disruptive to the daily operation of academics. **Level II violations** are more serious infractions indicating a more substantial disregard for school procedures and demonstrating a lack of student self-control. **Level III violations** are the most serious infractions indicating total disregard for the welfare of self and others.

School officials will determine what constitutes unacceptable behavior and address violations of that behavior utilizing their discretion. Unanticipated, unacceptable incidents will arise and require follow-up action. **The absence of any specifically defined rule or regulation, procedure, or policy should not be viewed as an indication of acceptable behavior.** Students should ask for clarification before making any assumption or conducting questionable behavior.

The rules in the disciplinary section of the student handbook will be established to provide clear expectations. Ascend expects parents to agree to work cooperatively with the school staff to help their student maintain the established behavioral standards.

CONSEQUENCES

Student misconduct may result in probation, suspension, dismissal, or expulsion. The school reserves the right to pursue disciplinary action or legal action for student behavior while under the jurisdiction of Ascend, which is subversive to good order and discipline in the school, even if the behavior is not specified in this handbook. Parents are expected to support and cooperate with school efforts.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH IDEA AND SECTION 504 ELIGIBILITY

Special education students are responsible for adhering to the same rules of conduct as nondisabled students. The school complies with all provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004, the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Colorado laws, and State Board Policy when implementing discipline procedures for students with disabilities.

DISCIPLINE

**ASCEND CODE OF CONDUCT
VIOLATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES**

The following list of violations is not meant to be all-inclusive. Administration will assign activities not listed to the appropriate level as “unspecified”. When an incident occurs involving multiple violations of the same level, staff may count each violation separately or consider the incident as one violation at a higher level for the purpose of determining the consequence(s). Multiple violations at any level may result in administrative assignment of probation.

LEVEL ONE (GENERAL) – Level I General violations will be carried over to the second semester if the total number exceeds four (five or more). No Level I violations will be carried over to the following school year.

OFFENSE	CONSEQUENCE
<p>1. Running in building/playing sports in building HORSE PLAY (in or out of buildings) without injury or damage</p> <p>2. SWEARING (using profanities, vulgarities, or obscenities)</p> <p>3. DISRESPECT/NONCOMPLIANCE</p> <p>4. TARDINESS TO ACADEMIC CLASSES Beginning with the sixth day of the fall semester the consequences for tardiness in academic class will start.</p>	<p>FIRST OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal warning <p>SECOND OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written warning <p>THIRD OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before school detention <p>FOURTH OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent conference required
<p>1. Violation of DRESS CODE</p>	<p>FIRST OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must change immediately and ● Parent notification <p>SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must change immediately and ● Parent notification and ● Before school detention

DISCIPLINE

LEVEL TWO (GENERAL) – Level II violations (general) will be carried over to the second semester if the total number exceeds one (two or more). No Level II violations will be carried over to the following school year.

OFFENSE	CONSEQUENCE
1. Possession of PORNOGRAPHIC MATERIAL or materials encouraging the use of illegal drugs or alcohol 2. Not leaving the building during an EVACUATION DRILL 3. CELL PHONE OR OTHER ELECTRONIC LISTENING DEVICE used in classrooms without teacher’s approval or during special events. 4. Running in building/playing sports in building/ HORSE PLAY (in or out of buildings) resulting injury or damage	FIRST OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting with Administration SECOND OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before school detention THIRD OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent Conference FOURTH OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to administration as a Level III
5. Conveying FALSE INFORMATION through written or verbal communication	FIRST OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent Conference SECOND OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to administration as a Level III violation
6. Inappropriate CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR or manners – includes leaving a mess & throwing food.	FIRST OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting with Administration SECOND OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before school detention THIRD OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent Conference FOURTH OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to administration as a Level III
7. Acts of minor VANDALISM NOTE: When accidental damage to property occurs, the student will take responsibility for repairing the damage by making the repairs; paying for the repairs to be made; or working off the sum of the repairs with equivalent work service hours. (This will not be recorded as a violation only if it is voluntarily reported and is accidental.)	FIRST OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pay for all damages and before school detention SECOND OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Referral to administration as a Level III violation
8. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY The sharing of individual homework assignment with other students by hardcopy or electronic means	All violations will be referred to the Principal. FIRST OFFENSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “0” on assignment ● Meeting with Administration ● Before school detention may also be assigned ● SECOND OFFENSE: Referral to administration as a Level III

DISCIPLINE

LEVEL THREE

- All Level III violations will be referred to administration for action.
- Level III violations may result in a recommendation for suspension
- A student guilty of felonious conduct shall, in all cases, be recommended for expulsion.

OFFENSE	CONSEQUENCE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HARASSMENT* 2. Bullying* 3. Involvement in ARSON, including irresponsible use of matches and lighters 4. Tampering with safety equipment or ALARM SYSTEMS; setting off fire alarms; creating a fire or safety hazard; or major acts of VANDALISM 5. Possession, distribution, or use of WEAPONS, FIREWORKS, or EXPLOSIVES 6. Unauthorized possession, distribution, or irresponsible use of, prescription or non-prescription DRUGS 7. Involvement in STEALING or extortion (on or off campus) 8. ASSAULT on another person 9. Inflicting or threatening BODILY HARM to others* 10. Inciting or participating in a MAJOR DISTURBANCE* in which another person is assaulted or damage to property occurs 11. SEXUAL HARASSMENT* 12. MISCONDUCT during school sponsored activities 13. IMPROPER ACTION toward another person causing physical or emotional harm 14. VIOLATION OF LAW* - municipal, state, or federal 15. UNAUTHORIZED POSSESSION of school property (keys, equipment, furnishings, etc.) 16. REFERRALS of any Level I and Level II violation to administration 	<p>FIRST OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probation, suspension, or expulsion • Behavior Contract <p>SECOND OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension, or expulsion • Behavior Contract <p>THIRD OFFENSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expulsion <p>A student guilty of felonious conduct shall, in all cases, be recommended for expulsion.</p>

*Includes violations by all electronic means. (Examples include, but are not limited to, email, texting, sexting, instant messaging, and actions on Internet-based or social networking apps or sites)

DISCIPLINE

BOMB THREATS

Threatening the use of a bomb or explosives of any kind shall be grounds for student expulsion or immediate employee dismissal, with all bomb threats being reported to police and with action being sought under all pertinent laws.

FAILURE TO ABIDE BY DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Students who fail to abide by the required disciplinary action assigned for a Level I or single Level II violation will be required to satisfactorily complete the consequence previously assigned and will be given an additional consequence for Disrespect. Students who fail to abide by the consequences of incidents involving multiple Level II's or a Level III violation will be assigned a Level III violation and referred to administration for further action.

WEAPONS

Ascend policy and Colorado state law strictly prohibit the possession and use of weapons and other dangerous items on school campuses. Weapons include, but are not limited to:

- Knives (butterfly, switchblade, box cutter/utility knife, pocket knife, Bowie knife, hunting knife, single blade folding knife, multi-blade folding knife, kitchen knife with sharp or serrated edges)
- Firearms/Guns (including paintball, pellet, BB, or a toy that could be mistaken for a firearm) and ammunition
- Throwing Stars
- Hatchets and axes
- Swords and other martial arts equipment
- Explosives (fireworks, firecrackers, dynamite)
- Tasers

The possession, threat of use, and use of weapons is strictly forbidden anywhere on campus or on any field trip or other off-campus school related activity. Students who violate this policy are subject to expulsion with all such violations being immediately reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency and remedy being sought under all pertinent laws.

DISCIPLINE

SUSPENSION

General Suspension for Ten (10) Days or Less

Suspension is defined as the administrative removal of students from class attendance at Ascend for a specified period of time due to violation(s) of school policy or probation. All suspensions at Ascend are out-of-school; the students must remain at home for the number of days assigned. The Principal may suspend students from Ascend for a period of ten (10) school days or less when it is determined that their behavior is detrimental to the good order of the school and that suspension is an appropriate disciplinary action for a serious violation of school rules.

The procedure for suspending students is as follows:

1. The Principal will meet with the students to provide notice of the charge of violation of school discipline and evidence against them. The students will be given the opportunity to respond to the charges.
2. If the facts support the students' guilt, the administrator will determine the appropriate term of suspension.
3. Upon notification of suspension, the Principal will inform the parent(s), either in person or by phone, of the suspension and the student will leave campus.
4. Suspended students may not attend school-sponsored functions on or off campus during the suspension, including weekends. Such exclusions include field trips, competitions, social events, etc.
5. Students suspended from school are expected to keep up with course material to avoid getting too far behind. They will be allowed to submit assignments by the appropriate deadlines if the assignments can be completed and submitted without being *at school*. When students return from suspension, they will be allowed to make up work pertaining to major grades, such as tests, if the work could not be completed at home.
6. Upon completion of suspension, students returning to school must make an appointment with the Principal to discuss returning to school and any additional restrictions that may apply. Parents should also attend this meeting.

Emergency Suspension

Emergency Suspension occurs when the Principal summarily suspends students for not more than three (3) days to complete an investigation for serious student misconduct under circumstances where immediate removal of the students is necessary to restore order, protect persons on the school grounds, protect the student, or protect school property. The Principal will meet with the students to provide notice of violations of school policy and evidence against them and allow them to respond. Parents will be immediately notified of the suspension and the students will immediately leave the school. Suspended students may not attend school-sponsored functions on or off campus during the suspension, including weekends. Such functions include field trips, competitions, social events, etc.

During the students' absence, a school official will complete the investigation. When possible, the administrator will complete the investigation by the end of the school day following the emergency suspension. The administrator will communicate findings to the students by phone and allow them to respond. Further disciplinary action will be recommended or taken as needed. The Principal may extend the suspension for a period not to exceed ten (10) days.

DISCIPLINE

EXPULSION

Expulsion is administrative removal of students from enrollment at Ascend College Prep due to violations of law and/or policy (e.g., felonious acts or habitually disruptive behavior). Expulsion from Ascend may result in denial of admission to another school.

Such expulsion shall take place subject to the constitutional rights of due process in state law. When the Principal determines that students should be recommended for expulsion, the parents or guardians will be immediately called to meet with the Principal. If extenuating circumstances exist, a conference can be held by phone or videoconference.

During the conference, the Principal will notify the student and parents/guardians orally or in writing of the intent to expel based on violations of school policy and/or law or probation and give them a chance to respond. Based on that meeting, the students may be suspended for ten (10) school days pending an expulsion.

The student and parents/guardians will be advised of their rights to a due process hearing and provided information on how to request said hearing. If the hearing is not requested within two (2) school days, the recommendation for expulsion will stand.

If the hearing is requested, the BOCES shall set the date, time, and place for a hearing. **The date for the hearing shall not exceed fifteen (15) school days from the date of the imposition of the suspension unless mutually agreed upon in writing by all parties.** In the notice, the BOCES shall advise the student and the parents/guardians in writing of the following rights to:

1. Be informed of the charges against them,
2. Present evidence,
3. Cross-examine witnesses represented by the school,
4. Call witnesses in their own behalf, and
5. Be represented by legal counsel at their own expense.

Ascend College Prep will have legal representation throughout the expulsion proceedings. A tape recorder or stenographer will record the hearing. Failure of the student or parent to appear at the hearing will result in the forfeiture of all procedural rights to contest the expulsion. The State Superintendent or designee will prepare findings, conclusions, and a final decision in writing and hand deliver or mail them to the Principal of Ascend and the student's parents within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing. The students or parents may request a transcription of the hearing at their own expense.

Following expulsion from Ascend College Prep, the Principal will notify the student's school of residence that the student is no longer enrolled. Upon request, educational records will be provided to the school where the student enrolls. A student who has been expelled from Ascend may not apply for enrollment at a later date, is prohibited from campus, and may not participate in school-related functions or activities on or off campus unless permitted by the Principal.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The faculty and administration of Ascend strive to develop character in each student. One cornerstone of this is integrity, including academic integrity. We aim to guide students in fully understanding the subject matter they study. In addition to readings, lectures, discussions and projects, student's original writings are an important part of this process. Cheating and submitting work that does not reflect their own process of synthesis and reflection shortchanges learning. Ascend takes violations of academic integrity very seriously, so review the below information carefully and seek clarification if you are unclear about the meaning of any of the below, as ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse for any future instances of plagiarism.

We understand that high school and college level coursework frequently requires that students build on previous scholarship or collaborate with other students. The below guidelines will help students distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable uses of others' work.

DEFINITIONS

Plagiarism is the act of passing off another person's ideas, writing, or other work as one's own. Plagiarism can occur in writing or audio-visual format. Even if a student produces an audio-visual assignment on their own, if they use someone else's words or ideas without citing it, that is considered plagiarism. It can occur in small portions of a student's work or in the entire submission. Plagiarism can be either intentional or accidental but is a breach of academic integrity regardless.

Self-Plagiarism is the act of re-using a student's own work in a new context without prior approval of the instructor and proper citation of the previous work.

Cheating is engaging or attempting to engage in any activity prohibited by the school that gives a student an unfair advantage over other students in a course or exam. This includes allowing others to complete an academic assessment or a portion of an academic assessment or assignment.

Contract Cheating is when a student engages with, or attempts to engage with, a third party to complete their assignment, assessment, or activity. This includes, but is not limited to, hiring a third party to complete work, downloading a paper from a "free" essay site or a paid essay mill, or asking a friend or family member to complete student work. This includes the trading of an already submitted and graded assignment in return for help on a new assignment.

Collusion is any kind of cooperation between students that gives an unfair advantage to one student, or a group of students, over others in the course or exam, including using a friend or family member's assignment and submitting it as one's own.

Investigation is the act of gathering and assessing any necessary data, facts, and evidence related to a suspected academic integrity violation.

MULTIPLE SUBMISSION

A student may not practice self-plagiarism, which is submitting the same paper, or substantially the same paper, in more than one course. If topics for two courses coincide, a student must have written permission from both instructors before either combining work on two papers or revising an earlier paper for submission to a new course.

CHEATING ON EXAMS

It is cheating to copy answers from other students or to refer without written permission to notes, books, laptop computers, cell phones, or other devices. The instructor should collect these items prior to the exam, but even if they do not, it is incumbent upon the student to follow these rules.

For take-home examinations, and for examinations for which the questions are distributed in advance, instructors should make the rules clear, and students should obey them to the letter. If students are in any doubt as to the meaning of the instructions governing such exercises, they should obtain clarification from the instructor. The ordinary expectation is that each student will prepare answers on their own; collaboration with others is acceptable only to the degree precisely and specifically described by the instructor. In all cases, the answer a student submits must represent their own understanding of the issues. If a student thinks that any answer or submission has been significantly influenced by consulting books or other people, they should cite this.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas as if they were one's own. Thus most forms of cheating on examinations are plagiarism; but the term is usually used in reference to papers rather than examinations.

If a student uses a source for a paper, they must acknowledge it. What counts as a source varies greatly depending on the assignment, but the list certainly includes readings, lectures, websites, conversations, interviews, and other students' papers. Every academic discipline has its own conventions for acknowledging sources. Instructors should make clear which conventions students must use. In all situations, students who are confused about the specific punctuation and formatting must nonetheless make clear in written work where they have borrowed from others—whether it be a matter of data, opinions, questions, ideas, or specific language. This obligation holds whether the sources are published or unpublished.

The most important guideline for plagiarism is that students must cite the source anytime they use someone else's ideas or information and they must enclose the words in quotation marks if they use someone else's exact words.

Spot plagiarism, in which a student uses the majority of someone else's words, while changing only a few words, and does not enclose the words in quotation marks, counts as plagiarism.

Submission of an entire paper prepared by someone else is an especially egregious form of plagiarism, and is grounds for the imposition of a particularly serious penalty, from a zero on the assignment to a zero for the entire course.

Paying someone else to write a paper for you or having a friend or family member write the paper for you is also considered egregious plagiarism. Submitting part of a paper or an entire paper generated by AI (ChatGPT and similar) is also considered plagiarism.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY INCIDENT TYPES

When a student is suspected of violating the Academic Integrity Policy, the incident is evaluated individually to determine both the severity and persistence of the behavior. Student incidents will be categorized according to the types indicated below, which provides guidance on the necessary course of action.

The types of violations indicated below are not cumulative; rather, they are based on the severity of the incident.

Penalties for violations of the academic integrity policy depend upon the severity of the incident and can range from being asked to review academic integrity resources up through withdrawal from the course.

If a student has previously documented academic integrity incidents or previous teachable moments recorded with the school, this may impact how a new incident is categorized and handled.

Teachable Moments

In some cases, a student may unintentionally or unknowingly commit a minor academic integrity violation, for example, minor issues of improper paraphrasing, citation, missing quotation marks, and/or minor self-plagiarism incidents. The decision of whether an incident should be considered a “teachable moment” is at the discretion of the instructor.

The instructor will provide the student with individualized feedback and information about academic integrity and resources to improve the student’s awareness and understanding.

Type I Incidents

Repeat instances of poor writing or citation “teachable moments” that require more intense guidance, instruction, and intervention.

Remediation and disciplinary actions are contextualized based on the individual student and course circumstances, the severity of the incident, and any record of previous incidents. For Type 1 and Type 2 academic integrity incidents, this may include some or all of the following:

- Feedback and resources from the instructor
- A low grade or a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam with the opportunity to revise and resubmit the work with corrections for a new grade
- A low grade or a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam without the opportunity to resubmit

Type 2 Incidents

Intentional plagiarism in student work. For example, this can include a copied passage or passages from another source in a paper, presentation, or other media submission without proper paraphrasing, citations, and/or use of quotations.

Remediation and disciplinary actions are contextualized based on the individual student and course circumstances, the severity of the incident, and any record of previous incidents. For Type 1 and Type 2 academic integrity incidents, this may include some or all of the following:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

- Feedback and resources from the instructor
- A low grade or a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam with the opportunity to revise and resubmit the work with corrections for a new grade
- A low grade or a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam without the opportunity to resubmit

Type 3 Incidents

Serious infractions of the academic integrity policy including:

Type 3A: Multiple documented plagiarism violations. The student has been officially warned and documented in a previous incident and is aware that plagiarism violates the University policy. Repeated instances of Type 3A may constitute grounds for withdrawal from the course.

Type 3B: Cheating, contract cheating, fabrication, falsification, and/or collusion (see definitions above). A single instance of a Type 3B Incident may constitute grounds for withdrawal from the course.

Type 3 incidents are serious academic integrity violations with corresponding serious disciplinary action, which may include some or all of the following:

- A low grade or a grade of 0 on the assignment or exam without the opportunity to resubmit
- Failure of the course or exam

The school administration reserves the right to take any or all of the following actions:

- Assign a failing grade for an examination, assignment, or course
- Look back at courses or exams from previous terms or the same term for other violations
- Gather and review a student's course or exam activity, IP address, and other data necessary for the academic integrity investigation
- Bar the student from enrolling in a course
- Remove the student from the dual-enrollment portion of the course
- Take other action, as appropriate

PROCEDURE

A student suspected of or proven to have plagiarized will meet with the instructor and a member of the administration. A determination of the type of plagiarism and the consequent steps will be determined at this time.

Student appeals related to Teachable Moments, Type 1, and Type 2 incidents must be submitted in writing via email to the principal no more than 7 days after the initial decision. The principal will render a final decision on the appeal within 7 business days of receipt.